the desire of the vicar, who had come to Oxford for the purpose of consultation with the committee at its last meeting. They had made several suggestions, which the architects employed upon the restoration, Messrs. J. and H. Francis, were about to embody in their plans. Mr. Freeman then read a paper on Malmesbury Abbey Church. This church is generally supposed to have been commenced by the celebrated Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, about 1135; and if this date be correct, we may possibly set it down as the earliest English example of the systematic preference of the pointed arch in the main arcades of a large church. The Norman fabric still forms the main portion of the building, but was subjected to important changes during the Decorated and Perpendicular eras. The west front was originally of the same shape as that afterwards employed at Salisbury—an early instance of *sham*. The Rev. J. H. Pollen, of Merton College, read an account of the sculptures in the great doorway of the church, as described by Mr. Cockerell.

Architectural Society of Northampton.—A special committee was held on March 8, for the purpose of making arrangements for the proposed spring meeting at Northampton. It is proposed to hold a large Architectural Congress, to invite members of all societies in union. The Wednesday after Easter, April 14, has been fixed for the day of meeting, and it is intended to have a morning meeting, for strictly architectural papers, and to hear Mr. Scott's report on St. Sepulchre's, then to visit the church, and to have a general evening meeting at seven, when members and their friends will be admitted by tickets. Earl Spencer has been invited to preside; and it is hoped that Professor Willis will be present to deliver a lecture on the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and on the Round Churches built after that model.

SIGHTS AND SCENERY.

French Plays.—Mr. Mitchell produces variety with such rapidity that we have scarcely time to say, "Go and see such a star in such a position," before the star sets and a new one rises, or at all events it changes its position. In case this should not be so with M. Lemaitre, we will advise every lover of good acting to see him in *Paillasse*. A distinguished lady who sat near us said, with a charming tear in the corner of each eye, that it was very absurd to come to the theatre to be made unhappy. Such of our readers as think so must stop to the end, when they will find all come right, and that they are none the worse, perhaps something the better, for the gentle exercise of their best feelings which the able actor has called forth. He is well supported by Mdlles. Clarisse and Edith.

Pictures from Plays.—We understand that H. R. H. Prince Albert has commissioned Mr. Edward Corbould to paint two pictures, one from the play of "King John," and the other from "The Corsican Brothers," both as performed at the Princess's Theatre, and embracing portraits of all the principal performers. Mr. Kean doubtless appreciates the compliment. It will be remembered that Mr. Corbould painted for the Prince the great scene from "The Prophet," as played at the Royal Italian Opera House.

ENGLISH ARTISTS IN EARLY TIMES.

Reverting to British workmen and mediæval art, as mentioned in the last number of the Builder, a very interesting fact occurs early in the 15th century, namely, King Henry IV. granting a passport to three English workmen, Thos. Colyn, Thos. Holliwell, and Thos. Poppehowe, to carry over and fix a very fine tomb and effigy they had made in alabaster of John IV. Duke of Bretagne, first husband of Joan of Navarre, queen of Henry IV.; wrought of Derby or Stafford alabaster, and no doubt worked by these men in London. The tomb is figured in Loubineau's "Hist. de Bretagne," p. 498. The tomb was by order of the Queen of England, and the passport is given in Rymer, viii. 510. Other instances I could quote.

Edward Richardson.

GAS LIGHTING.

The town of Corsham has just been lighted for the first time with gas, amid the ringing of bells and the perambulation of musical bands. —The Bicester Gas Company having considered themselves unfairly and too highly assessed to the poor-rates, the rateable value has been reduced from 60*l.* to 15*l.* The high assessment was alleged as the reason for keeping gas up to its present high price. It remains to be seen, therefore, to what extent the 45*l.* will enable and induce the company to moderate their charges.—At a late council meeting at Cowes, says a Hampshire contemporary, the report of the Gas Committee was entered upon, when Mr. Cotton presented some statistics, the result of inquiries made at seven neighbouring sea-ports, namely, Southampton, Fareham, Gosport, Portsea, Lymington, Poole, and Ryde, from which it appeared that the public lamps for Cowes were charged considerably higher than the average, or even any, of those places. The statement presented the following consumption:—Each lamp consuming 3,860 cubic feet of gas, would cost, at the former rate of 8*s.* 4*d.* per thousand, only 1*l.* 12*s.* 2*d.* per lamp per year, and at the present rate of 6*s.* 8*d.* to private consumers, 1*l.* 5*s.* 8½*d.* per lamp, whereas the town was paying 3*l.* per lamp. It appeared from the average of the seven towns mentioned, that 3,227 hours was the time gas was burnt, at a consumption of 13,908 cubic feet,—the average cost, perhaps, 3*l.* 6*s.* 5*d.* whereas, according to the number of hours burnt at Cowes, it would only be 1*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* It was ordered that the representation should be made to the Gas Company, and unless an alteration was made, it was stated that a proposition would be moved to burn the public lamps by metre.—M. Fontainemoreau, says the *Mechanics' Magazine*, has just patented some improvements in apparatus for the supply of air to the burner. The apparatus consists of a perforated metal or wire-cloth diaphragm, placed at the bottom of the chimney of the burner, and serves to produce a division of the up-current of air into minute streams, and a metal disc with a valve in the centre, which is sustained at a slight distance above the top of the chimney by means of projections, which rest on a ring of porcelain fitted to the top of the chimney-glass. The valve in the disc is operated by a thumb-screw, for the purpose of increasing at pleasure the area of opening.—In a recent lecture at the Royal Institution, Dr. Lyon Playfair exhibited some candles made of paraffine, or solid gas as it has been called, obtained from coal by slow distillation.

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

Ely.—Plans prepared by Mr. Burns for the sewerage and drainage of Ely, have been approved of by the engineering secretary of the General Board of Health, Mr. Austin, who recommends a reservoir in addition, near Barton. The local Board of Health, however, demur to the expense, and suggest that Mr. Burns and Mr. Austin consider whether the upper and lower towns should not be separately drained. The public works by the estimate would cost 9,385*l.*; private, 4914*l.*; and this exclusive of compensation for back drainage. The river water is recommended for town supply.

Fisherton.—The ancient church of Fisherton, according to the *Wilts Mirror*, is forthwith to be dismantled, the contractor for the new edifice having allowed 400*l.* for the old materials. The chancel will be rescued.

Winchester.—The east window of the cathedral is about to be restored as nearly as possible to the original design by Messrs. Baillie. St. Cross Hospital is about to undergo an extensive repair.

Wilton.—At a model lodging-house, or boarding-house rather, established by Mr. Sidney Herbert, at Wilton, the boarders are provided with food at a common table, and under the superintendence of one of the parochial clergy, who resides there as a sort of abbot to this improved monastery of single men, chiefly farm labourers, who are charged at the rate of only four shillings a week for board and lodging, a rate, we fear, much more eleemosynary than self-supporting. There is a library, with a piano and other musical instruments in the establishment. A contemporary ridicules the idea of a piano for farm labourers, but he is not perhaps aware that in Germany even the poorest family has its piano, which is made of common fir and other cheap woods, and is purchasable at a very small cost. The attempts made here by Messrs. Chambers, the journalists, and others, to introduce this cheering instrument amongst the poorer classes, merit countenance and commendation rather than ridicule. And we are glad to observe that a taste for it does appear to be spreading among the humbler classes. In passing through a rural part of Brompton, we have felt not a little pleased to hear the jingle of a very well played, though not very fine, piano in a milkman's hut.

Leamington.—The new cemetery at Leamington was consecrated on Thursday week. It comprises between three and four acres of ground, and is situated at the extremity of the parish. By the liberality of Mr. M. Wise, the churchwardens have been enabled to erect a chapel and a lodge. The chapel consists of nave, north aisle, apse, and tower, with spire. The roof is of open wood-work, and the edifice is in the Second Pointed style. Mr. D. G. Squirhill was the architect, and the works were executed by Mr. Ballard, builder.

Darwen.—Coal mining here appears to be playing mischief among the buildings. A dwelling-house fell suddenly a few days ago. The inmates, forwarned by some premonitory crackings, escaped. Several more houses are expected to fall every day.

Lytham.—The new schools (St. John's) lately opened are described by the *Preston Guardian* as containing three apartments,—one 41 feet by 18 feet, to be used as a girls' school; another 36 feet by 18 feet, to be used as a boys' school; the two so arranged as to be thrown into one, with a class-room to be used by either. The third apartment, 33 feet by 19 feet 6 inches, is to be used as an infant school. Each school is 26 feet high. Cottage ranges, with ovens, enable those children who come from a distance to warm their dinners; whilst a large copper admits of tea-making on an extensive scale, on occasion of public meeting. Externally, they are built of cobble stones, with Longridge stone dressings to doors and windows, and bands of ornamental brickwork. The design consists of a centre, flanked by gabled wings, with a porch in the middle. The architect is Mr. C. Verelst (better known by his late name of Charles Reed), of Liverpool. The contractors are Messrs. Catterall, of Kirkham, and Miller, of Lytham.—A parsonage has just been added to the new church of Lytham, which, otherwise conspicuous for its villas, regular streets, and other buildings, has of late been further improved by the erection of lodges at the west end by the lord of the manor, as an entrance to the park.

Selby.—The old abbey church of Selby is being restored and improved. One of the unsightly galleries has been removed, leaving the columns bare, and exposing to view much that was previously unseen. It is intended to take down the whole of the galleries, and remove the pews in the body of the church, substituting stalls, similar to those in the parish church of Doncaster.

Chesterfield.—A new survey of this town has been authorized by the central Poor Law Board. The scale is to be three chains to the inch. The local board is to appoint a surveyor to make the survey, with plan and valuation.

Darlington.—The local board of health here are providing a public park for recreation to the working classes. The trustees of the estate (20 acres) so to be appropriated are about to lay out 100*l.* in walks, and build an ornamental cottage at a cost of 250*l.* They have already formed roads of access to it, including a bridge across the Skerne, and also drained the land.

Kirkwall (Orkney).—The old church of St. Magnus, renowned in Scottish story, has of late been inspected by order of the local Pres-

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